

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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64

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03 SS-15 RSC-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-03 USIA-15 PRS-01

DEAE-00 SCA-01 SCS-03 SY-10 SNM-02 OPR-02 OMB-01

TRSE-00 JUSE-00 MC-02 L-03 DRC-01 /111 W

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R 171953Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6989

INFO AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

AMEMBASSY NASSAU

AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

COMNAVBASE GUANTANAMO BAY CUBA

COMCARIBSEAFRON

CONFIDENTIAL PORT AU PRINCE 1605

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, HA

SUBJECT: PURPORTED EXILE LANDING IN HAITI: THE MOLE ST.

NICOLAS INCIDENT

REF: NASSAU 1313; P-AU-P 1586

1. RECENT SECURITY-RELATED INCIDENTS NEAR SMALL TOWN OF MOLE ST. NICOLAS ON THE NORTHWEST PENINSULA OF HAITI (FACING THE WINDWARD PASSAGE) HAVE LED TO SENSATIONAL WIRE SERVICE REPORTS OF GUERRILLA LANDINGS OR EVEN AN ATTEMPTED COUP IN HAITI. MOST OF THESE STORIES ARE MUCH EXAGGERATED OR COMPLETELY INCORRECT. FOLLOWING IS OUTLINE OF EVENTS RELATED TO "INVASION FLAP" AS KNOWN TO EMBASSY.

2. ON SEPT. 10 A HAITIAN MILITARY PATROL APPEARS TO HAVE EXCHANGED SHOTS WITH PERSONS WHO HAD COME ASHORE FROM A BOAT ON THE COAST NORTH OF MOLE ST. NICOLAS. ONE HAITIAN MILITIAMAN WAS WOUNDED IN THE NECK. ON SEPT. 11 A HAITIAN NAVY PATROL

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CRAFT SENT TO THE SCENE OVERTOOK AND SEIZED IN THE VICINITY

OF MOLE ST. NICOLAS AN AMERICAN-REGISTERED YACHT, THE "MOLLY S III" WITH THREE AMERICANS ON BOARD. SEARCHING THE YACHT, HAITIANS FOUND A LARGE QUANTITY OF MARIJUANA. ARMS AND AMMUNITION WERE ALSO FOUND ON THE SHORE WHERE ORIGINAL EXCHANGE OF SHOTS TOOK PLACE SEPT. 11.

3. WHEN ORIGINAL SHOOTING INCIDENT TOOK PLACE, GOH SUSPECTED POSSIBLE EXILE LANDING ATTEMPT AND ALERTED ALL SECURITY FORCES. THIS IN TURN SET OFF WAVE OF RUMORS HERE OF EXILE LANDINGS. AFTER SEIZURE OF THE "MOLLY", HOWEVER, GOH SEEMED INCLINED TO BELIEVE THAT THE ORIGINAL ENCOUNTER INVOLVED DRUG SMUGGLERS. "MOLLY'S" CREW, NOW BEING INTERROGATED IN PORT AU PRINCE, CLAIM THEY WERE ONLY SMUGGLING MARIJUANA, PUT INTO MOLE ST. NICOLAS FOR REFUELING ENROUTE FROM JAMAICA TO FLORIDA, AND HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH ARMS OR AMMUNITION. GOH IS NOW TRYING TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE "MOLLY" WAS ENGAGED IN ARMS-RUNNING IN ADDITION TO DRUG-SMUGGLING OR WHETHER ARMS MAY HAVE BEEN LEFT BY ANOTHER BOAT.

4. GOH HAS ASSURED CHARGE THAT THERE IS NO GUERRILLA ACTIVITY WHATSOEVER IN HAITI, THAT CONDITIONS IN THE COUNTRY ARE NORMAL, AND THAT THERE IS NO DANGER TO SHIPPING IN AREA OF THE WIDWARD CHANNEL. FYI. SENSATIONAL WIRE SERVICE REPORTS AND RUMORS HERE HAVE BEEN FUELED BY GOH'S FAILURE TO MAKE ANY PUBLIC STATEMENT ON MOLE ST. NICOLAS INCIDENT, APART FROM EXAGGERATED AND APPARENTLY UNAUTHORIZED STATEMENTS OF AMBASSADOR VINCENT IN SANTO DOMINGO. EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS GOH IS RELUCTANT TO MAKE PUBLIC STATEMENT UNTIL ALL ASPECTS OF THE CASE ARE CLEAR.

5. FOR NASSAU: "MOLLY'S" CREW APPARENTLY SOUGHT TO STOP FOR REFUELING AT MOLE ST. NICOLAS, RATHER THAN AT GREAT INAGUA, THE USUAL REFUELING STOP FOR SMALL CRAFT TRAVELING BETWEEN JAMAICA AND FLORIDA, BECAUSE BAHAMIAN AUTHORITIES AT GREAT INAGUA ARE NOW MORE RIGOROUS THAN THEY USED TO BE IN SEARCHING SMALL CRAFT FOR ILLICIT DRUGS.

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Message Attributes

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